

**Washington, DC** – U.S. Congressman Mike Pence released the following statement today in support of Israel's right to maintain a blockade that seeks to prevent the arming of the terrorist group Hamas:

**“The nation of Israel has a right and a duty to defend her people against the attacks of a terrorist group that has repeatedly targeted innocent victims. The blockade of Gaza bolsters peace in the region by keeping weapons from reaching Hamas terrorists. This blockade helps to prevent Hamas from firing rockets and obtaining other arms that will be used to kill innocent Israeli civilians.**

**“Israel's blockade does not interfere with the flow of humanitarian aid. In fact, Israel transfers over 10,000 tons of humanitarian supplies a week into Gaza, including basic food, clothing, medicine and shelter supplies.**

**“The flotilla that was stopped by Israel's navy was intended to provoke a confrontation with Israel. Several leaders connected with the flotilla have said that it was their intention to break Israel's blockade.**

**“The United States must stand with its cherished ally Israel and defend its right to a blockade that keeps Hamas from terrorizing the region. Any loss of life is a terrible tragedy, but the U.S. must not be dissuaded by the knee-jerk reaction of Israel's critics who are seeking to use recent events to hinder Israel's right to self-defense.”**